

Borough Local Plan (BLP) 2016 COMMS PLAN

Introduction

The First Preferred Options Regulation 18 Consultation that took place over January to March 2014 consulted on the council's preferred approach to future development, including on 23 potential Green Belt release sites.

A second round of Regulation 18 consultation took place in summer 2015, with a series of focused consultations, giving people the opportunity to raise issues on specific topic areas within the draft plan.

Communications challenges and imperatives

To ensure residents, businesses and other interested parties are aware of the pre-submission opportunity to comment and how to do so.

Previous Regulation 18 consultations resulted in many comments on the lines of 'we appreciate the need for development, just not in our area' – we need to make clear that this is not a viable solution. The government requires us to accommodate our housing needs within the borough. We need to achieve this while balancing it with the need to protect the environment.

Spokespeople

Cllr Derek Wilson, cabinet member for planning, is the official spokesperson for the Borough Local Plan.

Any queries should be directed to Cllr Wilson or to the comms team (Shauna Hichens is named contact).

KEY MESSAGES

The reasons why we must have an agreed BLP in place:

- To ensure development is informed by the wishes of local residents, businesses and organisations
- To avoid planning decisions being made at appeal, which may not factor in local preferences
- Adoption of the Local Plan will give residents certainty about the development strategy and future land uses within the Royal Borough.

The council's obligation:

- Dwellings need to be built. This is required to meet statutory requirements and to meet the accommodation needs of our growing population.
- Up to 13,500 need to be built in the borough from 2013 to 2032.

Explaining the process:

- The previous Regulation 18 consultations gave people the opportunity to suggest where new houses be built, and to raise any specific issues they felt were relevant.
- Comments received have been built into the plan.
- The next step is for the council to pull the plan together in preparation for submission to the Secretary of State in September.
- Before it goes to the Secretary of State, residents, businesses and all interested parties will have a chance to comment on the soundness of the plan. This will be through a public consultation that will take place in early September.
- If we delay the process, we increase the risk of Communities and Local Government intervening.

Other key points:

- Regulation 18 consultation is about content. Regulation 19 consultation is to check soundness.

Public contact details

All promotional material needs to point readers towards the website where full details are available and which is regularly updated. The address to be used in promotional material is www3.rbwm.gov.uk/blp

Other public contact details:

01628 683810

planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk

Planning Policy, Zone C, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead SL6 1RF

Target audiences

- Residents
- Developers
- Local industries and commerce
- Local businesses via the town managers
- Chambers of commerce
- Town and parish councils
- Neighbourhood plan groups
- Community groups and organisations
- Lead member
- All councillors
- Local MPs
- Internal (all councillors and staff)
- Local media
- Planning press

Tactics and tools

- RBWM website – dedicated page, kept up to date. All promotional material points to this webpage for full info
- RBWM website marketing panel (at relevant times)

- Around the Royal Borough
- Facebook
- Twitter – use #RBWM_BLP
- information in council staff publications (Borough Bulletin, Key Messages from CMT)
- Residents' newsletter
- press releases
- media diary
- keep CSC informed